

PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

Vers. 1

Subject to Change!

Final posted in Canvas on

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**Loyola Institute for Ministry
Loyola University New Orleans**

Spirituality and the Theology of Work

LIM G819-Y1G0E

Summer 2026

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Office Hours: By appointment, email me to set up a meeting

Important! You will be notified by email to your Loyola email address when your course web site is available (normally the week before class begins). Please reply to the instructor's email when you receive it to confirm that you are ready to begin the course

Course Description

Oriented to those students who understand their ministry as primarily taking place outside of a parish, congregation, or other explicit ecclesial community, this course investigates work and profession from the standpoints of vocation and community. The course offers a variety of theological and historical perspectives related to a spirituality of work in the world. Creativity, redemption, and collaboration are explored in light of workplace systems and the difference that Christians can make in the world.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- articulate some of the key theological foundations that underpin a sense of the sacred in everyday life and work.
- identify some of the historical strands in the Christian tradition that have led to a dualistic view of "sacred" set apart from "secular" realms and some of the theologians that have developed a more integrated vision of the sacred in the secular.
- explain some of the ways that the theological perspectives of St. Ignatius of Loyola and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin overcome dualistic views that separate the sacred from the secular.
- speak about a spirituality of the laity and how it may differ and yet draw from earlier monastic spiritualities.
- explain how Catholic social teaching provides guidance and direction for ministry in public life and work.
- articulate their own theology and spirituality of everyday life and work.

Required Texts

Please order the required texts as soon as possible from the bookstore of your choice.

King, Ursula. *Christ in All Things*. Orbis Books, 2016. ISBN-13 978-1-6269-8190-4. (Note: This book is available in Canvas courtesy of Loyola's Monroe Library. You may print/email/download up to 100 pages at a time. If you need more than 100 pages, close the tab and reopen the ebook from the link and send 100.)

Ray, Kathleen Darby. *Working*. Fortress Press, 2011. ISBN-13: 978-0-8006-9810-2. This text is available to read online at the [Internet Archive Library](#) once you create a free account.

Additional readings and media as included in the Canvas course.

Evaluation and Course Requirements

Sequence of Topics/Calendar of Assignments

Weekly sessions in this course run from Tuesday–Monday. Please note that all assignments must be completed by Midnight on Monday, the last day of the weekly session, except for Week 1; you must complete your personal introduction by Sunday, 5/31 by 11:59pm Central Time, or risk being administratively dropped from the course.

Session	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 May 26– June 1	Getting Started (May 25, Memorial Day Holiday)	Introduce self; complete readings
Week 2 June 2–8	A Spirituality of the Laity	Complete readings, media, discussion questions
Week 3 June 9–15	Perspectives on Work: A Historical Overview	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; attend synchronous class meeting (optional)
Week 4 June 16–22	Work as Christian Vocation (June 19, Juneteenth Holiday)	Complete readings, media, discussion question; attend small group meeting (required)
Week 5 June 23–29	A Theological Foundation for Marketplace Ministries	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; Mid-term Assignment due 6/29 by 11:59 pm CDT
Week 6 June 30–July 6	Catholic Social Teaching: Vision for Ministries in the Marketplace (July 3, Independence Day Holiday)	Complete readings, media, discussion questions

Week 7 July 7–13	Contemplation in Action	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; attend synchronous class meeting (optional)
Week 8 July 14–20	Spirituality for Life and Work	Complete readings, media, discussion questions; attend optional synchronous class meeting; attend small group meeting (required)
Week 9 July 21–27 August 1	Ministry in the Marketplace	Complete readings, media, discussion questions
Week 10 July 28–31	Final Assignments and Course Evaluation	Final Assignments due 7/28 by 11:59 pm CDT

Wednesday, August 5: due date for posting final grades

Week One Assignments

- 1) Read overview and other documents in Canvas
- 2) Participate in a Discussion on Canvas by introducing yourself and greeting your fellow students. (Complete by Sunday, 5/31, to avoid being administratively dropped from the course.)
- 3) Indicate your preferences for synchronous class meetings (attendance is optional).
- 4) Review the syllabus and learning agreement

Assessment

Each student's final grade will include the following parts:

		Percentage of Grade	
		Graduate	CEU
1	Substantive participation in weekly discussion via online postings	50%	95%
2	Spiritual Development	5%	5%
3	Final Assignment (10-12 page reflective essay)	45%	–

1) Substantive participation in weekly discussion via online postings (50% graduate / 95% CEU)

Please note: All times are Central Time.

For each Discussion assignment, students are required to make three (3) posts: a major post of 300-500 words in which they respond to the question posted, and two (2) minor posts of no more than 150-200 words each in which they respond to two (2) of the major posts made by their fellow students. In weeks where there are two discussion board questions, students

are required to make one major post and two minor posts for each question (totaling 2 major, 4 minor posts). The work week for classes begins each Monday at noon Central Time and lasts through Monday 11:59 am Central Time.

Beginning Each Tuesday

- Read the overview for the week's work and begin individual work for the week. Questions that arise about the material may be addressed to the professor in the Question Board or via email.
- Contributions to Discussions should reflect critical engagement with both the required readings as well as any other assigned material and should demonstrate itself as such.

By Wednesday, 11:59pm CT.

- When there is an assigned group leader, beginning several weeks into the semester, the first major post to the weekly discussion question is due by Wednesday night for group leaders and by Friday night for everyone else. Some weeks require students to answer more than one question as a major post.
- If the class size requires it, groups will be created and assigned several weeks into the semester. When this occurs, the group discussion leader posts a response to the discussion question by Wednesday night. This initial post by the group discussion leader should also raise a question for the group to consider and be between 300-500 words (Major post).

By Friday, 11:59pm CT.

- Other members of the group respond to the discussion question by the end of Friday night with a major post between 300-500 words. Either this initial post or a subsequent minor post should also address the group leader's question.

By Monday, 11:59am CT.

- All students respond to two other member's posts in 150-200 words by Monday noon (Minor posts).
- All members should have a total of three discussion posts by Monday noon (one Major, two Minor) for each discussion board question.

Contents of Discussion Post

To earn full credit, you should do the following things:

- post and respond by the due date.
- adhere to word length requirements;

- refrain from inappropriate posts (words/tones that diminish the character and community of the course) Practice using "I-statements," avoid generalizations by qualifying your words;
- provide content of substance based on the course material—that is, not comments such as “I agree wholeheartedly,” but rather content that offers an original and informed contribution to the discussion, either as an opening or as a response, and reference course material;
- integrate (reference/cite) what you have read, how you understand the material, your experience, the remarks of your colleagues, and the course material;
- posting fully addresses the weekly questions and stimulates substantial follow-up postings;
- write in accessible prose—that is, not necessarily formal academic prose, but prose that is as clear and correct as you can make it, citing material not your own, and avoiding “text-speak” (using complete sentences rather than abbreviations and emoji to make your point, for example).

For a detailed explanation of the grading policy, please see the Discussion Board Tip and Grading Rubric in the Week 2 module. I look forward to seeing your comments and insights in the discussions.

Small Group Meeting (required):

During our class you will host your own virtual learning sessions in Week 4. This is a wonderful way to help build community, and contextualize our discussions. If class size requires it, I will organize class members into smaller groups. These small group assignments will be announced during Week 3 and also posted in Week 3 on the groups and discussions page if needed.

You should plan to meet for at least one hour with other members of your group to discuss this week’s assigned material in light of the discussion questions on Canvas. Once you have met, you should complete the Small Virtual Group Assignment and submit it by Monday noon of the weekly session.

Synchronous Virtual Classes (optional):

There will be **two** optional opportunities to meet synchronously as a whole class through Zoom, available through Canvas during the course of the semester. These will be scheduled in weeks 3 and 7. Plan for each session to last 1 ½ hours. In the Week 1 module you are invited to fill out an availability survey so that we can find times that work for the majority of the class. After the surveys are complete I will send out an announcement to share the exact dates and times for these sessions.

If you attend the synchronous virtual class, you do not have to write your weekly major/minor posts on discussion board. Attendance and active participation in the virtual class will count for your weekly participation grade.

2) Spiritual Development (5% graduate / 5% CEU)

In lieu of a discussion in Session 10, all students are asked to upload a 300-500 essay on their practice of the Ignatian Examen. The essay should include what you found of value (or not), what effect it seemed to have on your life and ministry, and any other considerations. If you chose to follow a different spiritual practice during this course, please discuss your experience of that practice. (5 points).

2) Final Assignment (50% graduate students / not required for CEU)

In a 10-12 page reflective essay, review the readings, videos, audio recordings, as well as your own supplemental research, and develop a Christian theology and spirituality of work (due at the end of the course). Full assignment located in Canvas.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B-	80-82.9	D+	67-69.9
A-	90-92.9	C+	77-79.9	D	60-66.9
B+	87-89.9	C	73-76.9	F	0-59.9
B	83-86.9	C-	70-72.9		

Overall Grading Scale

Please note that the LIM grading scale uses B as the standard for graduate-quality work. A and B+ indicate graduate work done with distinction, with B- and below signifying levels below graduate standards.

Letter Grade	Quality Points	Characteristics of Student Work
A	4.0	Work done with distinction. An outstanding use of all four evaluation criteria as a catalyst for critical reflection.
A-	3.7	Work done with distinction, with a few minor corrections needed.
B+	3.3	Work of very good quality. The assignment is addressed in an exceptional manner with a good balance of personal insight and academic documentation.
B	3.0	The standard for the master's degree. The assignment is adequately addressed in a clear and concise manner with appropriate documentation. If subsequent work meets this standard of quality, the degree will be awarded.
B-	2.7	The work is slightly below the standard for master's level work. The assignment is addressed, but a number of corrections is needed to address the assignment in a clear and concise manner. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C+	2.3	Substandard graduate work. Evaluation criteria are not adequately met in the assignment. Moderate improvement is needed. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.
C	2	Less than graduate-level work. Evaluation criteria are not met. If subsequent work continues at this level, the student may not continue in the degree program.

C-	1.7	Below average, grade does not count towards graduation.
D+	1.3	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
D	1	Minimally passing, grade does not count towards graduation.
F	0	Assignment not addressed at all, incomplete assignment, or not submitted on time.

Course Policies

Incomplete Grade Policy

Students are subject to the university policy regarding incomplete grades with the following additions to university policy. Grades of Incomplete are given at the instructor's discretion. Students must complete LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources » Policies, Forms, & Services section of their Canvas course. Students should first inquire of their instructor whether or not they are eligible for an incomplete; this must occur with sufficient time to complete the process explained here. To be eligible, students may not have received an Incomplete in the previous semester, must have completed at least 75% of the course work to date, and must have at least a C or above in the course. After the instructor makes an initial assessment of eligibility, including checking with the LIM Office to ensure there was no Incomplete in the previous semester and finds the student eligible, by the due date of the course's final assignment, a student must complete and obtain all signatures for LIM's Incomplete Grade Request Form found in the Resources section of their Canvas course and submit it to their instructor, who will forward a copy to the LIM Director. LIM graduate students may not receive Incompletes in LIM courses in consecutive semesters.

Attendance & Participation

Students are subject to the university policy regarding attendance found online in the Bulletin. Students in online courses communicate their presence by active participation in weekly discussions. Each course's instructor sets requirements for how many times students must post on the Discussion Board in Canvas. Failing to post during the first week of class may result in removal from the course. If you foresee that you will be unable to post in a given week, please contact the instructor ahead of time. Extensions for posting are given at the instructor's discretion and for a valid reason may be granted if arranged ahead of time. In extraordinary circumstances, students may arrange with their instructor to post up to two weeks after a deadline, though this may entail a grade reduction. Posts and other assignments submitted more than two weeks late may be subject to a grade of zero. If students do not post in a given week, they are considered absent. Absence for more than one week without contacting the instructor may result in removal from and failure of the course.

University Policies

Please read Part 2 of the syllabus (located in Canvas) for university policies on plagiarism, AI, accessible education, and more